Benny or Benno? Our Aussie Lingo

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I declare that this report is my own original work and that the contributions of others have been duly acknowledged.

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Abstract

Hypocoristics are informal variations of words which are common in Australian English, such as *footy* for *football*. The aim of this study was to examine whether people used different hypocoristics to convey different meanings for novel words (as common nouns, place names, male names, and female names), when presented as either ‘loveable’ or ‘unloveable’. Our sample consisted of 132 adults living in Australia (66% female, mean age 25 years), who completed this study online. In line with the as-yet untested predictions of McAndrew (1992), it was hypothesised that participants would apply significantly more *-ie* endings to loveable than unloveable words, and significantly more *-o* endings to unloveable than loveable words. Both hypotheses were supported. Our results further supported the prediction that participants would add significantly more *-o* endings to male than female names, but not the prediction that they would add significantly more *-ie* endings to female than male names: in fact, the use of *-ie* did not differ. Changes made to individual word types, and to word length, are also discussed in a more exploratory manner. Overall, the results suggest that Australian adults create hypocoristics not randomly, but in a systematic way, to convey different meanings.

Hypocoristics are variations of standard English words which alter the structure and the ending of the word, such as *footy* for *football*, *sanga* for *sandwich*, and *servo* for *service station* (Kidd, Kemp, & Quinn, 2011). Hypocoristics are used in many languages (see Farjardo & González, 2018); however, they are particularly prominent in Australia (Sussex, 2004). Overall, the use of hypocoristics in Australia has been suggested to serve important functions, especially for social and cultural recognition (Bardsley & Simpson, 2009). Theorists such as McAndrew (1992) have hypothesised that different hypocoristics may convey different meanings, with *-ie* (also spelled *-y*) used more often for words considered more "loveable" and *-o* more often for words considered to be "unloveable". This might also extend into differences in how male and female names are changed, with Phillips' (1990) study and McAndrew's (1992) theory suggesting that female names will receive more *-ie* endings and male names more *-o* endings. However, there is little empirical research on hypocoristics, and these theoretical claims do not seem to have been tested experimentally. The few studies to date have sought to explore how people use hypocoristics across a range of word types, including common nouns, place names, and personal names. Hypocoristics are generally formed in similar ways for these word types, with a few differences for place names and personal names, discussed further below. This study aims to test McAndrew's (1992) theory of loveable *-ie* endings and unloveable *-o* endings. Whether people make words longer or shorter will also be examined, as well as any differences between the pattern of changes made to different word types overall.

Australian English (AusE) began to develop as a result of the resettlement of convicts and migrants from Britain and Ireland in the late 1700s (Tollfree, 2001). The two different varieties of English spoken by the British and Irish contributed to

the development of a broad form of AusE that everyone in Australia could comprehend (Tollfree, 2001). AusE is constantly changing to accommodate new phrases and words (Sussex, 2004). It was once considered to be a 'lazy' and 'careless' distortion of British English, but this view began to change when the number of native-born Australians was greater than those who had immigrated to Australia, as a national pride began to form for Australian words and phrases (Delbridge, 2001). AusE has been identified as being important in maintaining an Australian identity (Bardsley & Simpson, 2009). However, some features of AusE, including slang and hypocoristic forms, can be difficult for non-AusE speaking individuals to understand (Kidd et al., 2011).

Hypocoristics are commonly used in AusE. They express the same meaning and retain some of the same structure as the original word, but they may differ in terms of length and formality (Kidd et al., 2011). Common forms of hypocoristics are often shortened and undergo structural changes, with a different ending being attached to the word. The most common forms of hypocoristics are *-o* (as in *bottle-o* for bottle shop), *-ie/y*, (as in *cockie* for cockatoo), and shortening the word without an ending attached (as in *admin* for administration). Other forms include the endings *-a/er* (such as *cuppa* for a cup of tea), *-s* (such as *probs* for probably), and *-za* (*Bazza* for Barry). The shortening of certain words is often considered to represent "baby talk"; for example, *prezzie* for present, or *dins* for dinner might be used when adults talk to children (Wierzbicka, 1986). However, there appears be a more logical explanation for the linguistic behaviour of creating hypocoristics. The "baby talk" categorisation would suggest that hypocoristics are only used for words that are more basic, which is true of saying *birdie* for bird. However, it fails to acknowledge why words with more complex meanings still encounter these changes (Wierzbicka,

1986). For example, hypocoristics are applied to specific types of birds, such as *maggie* for magpie and *cockie* for cockatoo, without them sounding like "baby talk".

It has been suggested that hypocoristic use serves important functions, especially for social and cultural identity. The use of these words can help to maintain relationships and assert group membership and can produce a feeling of belonging, through individuals using a shared expression (Bardsley & Simpson, 2009). Wierzbicka (1986) suggests that hypocoristics are an important part of AusE because they can express an Australian "toughness" in the sense that Australians love informality and dislike articulated speech. The use of hypocoristics often reflects a need to express humour into conversations and can also be used to show affection and friendliness (Wierzbicka, 1986). This creates a sense of mateship and shared identity by creating a culture of converging similarities in language, which is important within Australian culture (Kidd, Kemp, Kashima, & Quinn, 2016).

In an effort to explain how people converge similarities in language, Giles (2008) developed communication accommodation theory (CAT). He did this by observing the way people adapt their speech style and linguistics to their communicative situation. This theory emphasises the importance of social identity and how that identity can influence language. CAT suggests that accommodation allows speakers to regulate whether they want to be perceived as being similar to their audience, by converging to maintain a positive social identity, or whether they want to diverge, or differentiate themselves from their audience (Kidd et al., 2016). This suggests that people have control over how much of a social identity they want to share, and helps to explain how and why people communicate within social groups (Gallois, Ogay, & Giles, 2005). As hypocoristics are understood to be important for creating a shared expression and asserting oneself as a member of a

group (Bardsley & Simpson, 2009), CAT could suggest a cultural and social explanation for the way Australian adults use hypocoristics.

People make various hypocoristic changes to all kinds of words, including common nouns, personal names, and place names. Hypocoristics of common nouns are often used casually and informally, in both speech and writing (Bardsley & Simpson, 2009). In AusE, *-o* endings seem to be more common for occupations, such as *journo* for journalist, and *ambo* for ambulance worker, while the *-ie* ending is the most widely applied to objects (Bardsley & Simpson, 2009). Although common nouns are frequently used as hypocoristics, there is relatively little research on these word types, and majority of studies focus on personal names and place names.

As hypocoristics are important in the formation of social identity, it is perhaps not surprising that personal names are subject to linguistic changes. These changes can take many forms, such as Caitlin to *Caity,* Samuel to *Sam*, and Jackson to *Jacko*. These hypocoristics help to express affection and shared attitudes for those who are friendly and familiar (Wierzbicka, 1986). This pattern has also been observed across a range of other languages. Farjardo and González (2018) analysed the shortening of personal names across 23 languages, including English (but not limited to Australia) through the collection of written sources and examples from linguistic experts. Their data showed that endings *-ie*, *-o*, *-a*, and *-s*, as well as shortening names, were commonly used across languages, including *Chris* (Christophe [French]), *Ulla* (Ulrika [Danish]), and *Pili* (Pilar [Spanish]). This suggests that while personal names themselves may differ amongst languages, the hypocoristic changes made to them appear universal (Farjardo & González, 2018).

Some endings, however, including *-z* and *-za*, seem unique to Australia, for example *Shaz* for Sharon and *Gazza* for Garry (Wierzbicka, 1986). These endings

appear to replace word-medial *-r*, suggesting that this type of change to a personal name might just be a phonological process (Simpson, 2004). However, these endings are different in the sense that they are largely informal and represent an affectionate tone in a more personal way, while adding humour into a conversation (McAndrew, 1992). It would not be uncommon for someone to introduce themselves as *Sam* instead of Samuel, but rarely would someone introduce themselves as *Shaz* instead of Sharon (Wierzbicka, 1986). This suggests that not all hypocoristics are equal, and different meanings might underpin the way they are used (de Klerk & Bosch, 1996).

Nicknames within social groups help to express familiarity (Wierzbicka, 1986). It is also common for hypocoristics to be used for people who are famous or well known. For example, players in the Australian Football League (AFL) often have their names changed, such as Jarryd Roughhead, often referred to as *Roughy,* and Alistair Clarkson, better known as *Clarko.* This can be the result of expressing affection, as it can be likened to being on "first-name terms with a well-known individual" (McAndrew, 1992, p. 180), allowing AFL fans to create a shared identity and in-group perspective of these individuals with whom they do not have a familiar relationship (Sussex, 2004). It appears individuals are aware of the social significance of using hypocoristics, and consciously apply them to help maintain a sense of identity and create an insider perspective with others (Sussex, 2004).

This in-group perspective is also evident in the use of hypocoristics for place names. It is often demonstrated in travel articles which include the phrase "as it's known to locals", as a way of showing people that they can be included in the insider perspective and gain a sense of belonging, rather than being considered 'outsiders' (Bardsley & Simpson, 2009, p. 9). Simpson (2001) collected hypocoristic versions of 346 Australian place names from both written and spoken sources. Her data showed

these hypocoristics can take a variety of forms, much like those for personal names and common nouns, for example, *Tassie* (Tasmania), *Baulko* (Baulkham Hills), and *Adders* (Adelaide). Simpson (2001) also found that in addition to receiving a range of common endings, place names are subject to 'The' being added to the beginning, as in *The Alice* (Alice Springs) or *The Gong* (Wollongong). This initial 'The' may help to highlight the uniqueness that individuals attach to the specific location (Simpson, 2001).

The majority of these changes express familiarity for a certain place, but not all hypocoristics for place names do. It is not uncommon for place names, and personal names, to be turned into puns or some other creative kind of wordplay (Simpson, 2001). Some hypocoristics portray a joke, such as *Slowbart* for Hobart, or *Longfog* for Longford, a Northern Tasmanian country town known for its foggy winter days. Hypocoristics that are used for place names have been found to differ among social groups and locations, further suggesting that there is a strong social component to hypocoristic use (Simpson, 2001).

As outlined above, there are many suggestions about the reasons for people choosing to make certain hypocoristic changes to various words. One important but currently untested hypothesis is that the common endings *-ie* and *-o* convey different information. McAndrew (1992) suggested that *-ie* endings can be classed as 'loveables', which are used to convey affection and familiarity, whereas *-o* endings are classed as 'unloveables' and are more unaffectionate and excessive. To help explain how these hypocoristics are used in AusE, McAndrew (1992) also suggested that both the loveables and unloveables contain more specific subclasses. The **loveables** can be used to express mateship and affection, in order to create a sense of belonging and togetherness, as in *tradies* for tradespeople, representing groups of

people who have a shared identity or interest. Loveable *-ie* endings can also represent familiarity and informality for things that are common and well-known in Australia, such as *footy* for football. McAndrew (1992) did acknowledge that *-ie* endings are not always loveable and can also be used in terms of rebuke for objects that have the potential to fuel anger and criticism, as in *pollie* for politician. The *-ie* endings can also be seen in adjective nouns, such as *smoothie*.

In terms of the **unloveables**, McAndrew (1992) suggests that these forms can be used in terms of contempt and ridicule, especially for discriminatory references, such as *reffo* for refugee. They may also be used through pure laziness and carelessness, using a 'because we can' type attitude and exerting less effort than would normally be required (McAndrew, 1992). The unloveable *-o* endings might also be used in terms of excess, such as when people are acting *aggro* for aggressive. The unloveables can also be used as a way of Australians responding to tall poppy syndrome; "cutting down" leaders or groups in the public eye (McAndrew, 1992), such as *Scomo* for Australian Prime Minister, Scott Morrison.

While McAndrew (1992) did suggest *-ie* endings are loveable and *-o* endings are unloveable, he also recognised that this is not the case for all words. He also suggested a subclass for both the loveables and unloveables described as "mirage" suffixes, where words that end in *-ie* or *-o* are not loveable but not unloveable either, and given their endings for various unrelated meanings (e.g., *hoochie*, which derives from a Japanese name for a protective covering, or *fisho*, which is not meant to be unloveable, but derives from a nineteenth-century reference for fishmongers in Sydney).

Bardsley and Simpson (2009) collected data of hypocoristics from Australian databases containing thousands of recorded hypocoristics. The researchers

discovered that personal names and place names have a higher percentage of 'other endings' than common nouns (beyond the most common endings *-ie*, *-o*, *-s*, *-as*, or *-a*), with personal names having 25% 'other endings', place names having 27% 'other endings', and common nouns having only 10% 'other endings'. This suggests that there is more flexibility and creativity in the hypocoristics for personal names and place names than for common nouns (Bardsley & Simpson, 2009).

Despite the large amount of descriptive work (e.g., Sussex, 1994, who created a database of almost 4,300 Australian hypocoristics), there is limited empirical research on the use of hypocoristics, especially studies that look at common nouns, place names, and personal names together. Kidd et al. (2011) conducted a study that asked 115 participants aged 17 to 84 years (who had lived, on average, 95% of their lives in Australia) to record as many hypocoristics they could think of in 10 minutes. Their data showed that *-ie* endings were most common, showing support for McAndrew's theory, as they were mostly attached to words that could be considered affectionate (e.g., *sweetie* for a sweet person). Some words given *-ie* endings, however, were negative (e.g., *druggie* for drug addict). Kidd et al. (2011) also found evidence which contrasts with McAndrew's (1992) theory of *-o* endings being unloveable, rather demonstrating that they tended to represent occupations (e.g., *ambo* for ambulance worker, *garbo* for garbage collector). It is therefore important to investigate the use of *-o* endings when participants are required to change words which do not involve occupations. Kidd et al. (2011) also looked at age differences and found that both *-ie and -o* endings were more commonly used by older participants (mean age 72 years) and less in the younger participants (mean age 24 years). Younger participants were also more likely to

remove the ending of a word completely compared to the older group. This suggests there may be differences in age groups for hypocoristic use.

There is little research on gender differences in hypocoristic use. McAndrew (1992) claimed there are beliefs that males might use more *-o* or 'unloveable' endings than females, and females might make more *-ie* or 'loveable' endings than males, possibly due to the gender stereotypes of males being considered more 'macho' and females being more 'loving and nurturing'. McAndrew (1992) himself, however, suggested that males do use more unloveable endings than females, but were equally likely to use loveable endings too (McAndrew, 1992). Kidd et al. (2011) also tested whether males used more unloveable *-o* endings than females. They did not find any evidence for this overall; however, they did find differences between age groups. Middle-aged males (40 to 59 years old) reported twice as many *-o* endings than middle-aged females, and older males (60 to 84 years old) produced slightly more than older females.

Another way that gender differences might occur is through changes made to male and female names. Wierzbicka (1986) suggested that *-za* endings are typically used to express masculinity and display an affectionate 'toughness' (e.g., *Gazza* for Garry), predicting that this ending is more likely to be used for male names rather than female names. Taylor (1992) claimed that *-o* endings represent masculine names (e.g., *Tommo* for Thomas), whereas *-a* endings represent more feminine names (e.g., *Isa* for Isabelle). McAndrew's (1992) theory might also be applicable here, with the gender stereotypes mentioned before as portraying males as 'macho' and females as 'nurturing', this might result in more male names ending in *-o* and more female names ending in *-ie*. Phillips (1990) asked 175 American students to list the nicknames they were known by, and who gave them the nickname. The

results showed that more females had nicknames ending in *-ie/y* than males, and *-o* endings were more often applied to male names than female names.

Previous research with participants from similar demographics as the present study investigated the factors that affect hypocoristic formation. Burton (2011) presented participants with written sentences which each contained a novel word: common noun, place name, or personal name. Participants were instructed to write down a "more Australian" version of each novel word. The words varied in number of syllables (one, two, or three), to see if hypocoristics made the words shorter, the same length, or longer. The data showed that the shorter words tended to be made longer, and longer words tended to be made shorter, with personal names being more likely to be shortened than common nouns or place names (Burton, 2011). Overall changes to words were also examined, which showed that participants treated all word types similarly, with *-ie*, *-er*, and *-o* being the most common endings. Males were more likely to use wordplay to creatively change words and were also more likely to add *-o* endings than were females. Differences in hypocoristics for names presented as male and female were also examined, with the data showing that male names were more likely to have an *-o* ending attached (Burton, 2011).

Webster (2012) replicated Burton's (2011) study, but presented the sentences verbally and got participants to respond verbally, rather than in writing, as a way of increasing ecological validity and trying to generalise findings. The results of Webster's (2012) study were similar to Burton's (2011), suggesting that presenting this task in written form is ecologically valid, even for an aspect of language that is associated more strongly with speech than with writing.

The present study

The present study aimed to consolidate and add to previous research examining how Australian adults change words to make them sound "more Australian". It also extended previous research by being one of the first studies to see how participants change novel words (rather than words they have heard before), for common nouns, place names, female names, and male names. The sentences contained novel words so participants could not use familiarity to determine how the word could be changed. We first examined the range of changes made to the novel words and provided descriptive information about the changes made for each word type. Based on previous research with a similar population, it was hypothesised that the most common changes made to words would be adding *-ie*, adding *-o*, and removing the end, with a range of other changes made as well.

The main aim of the present study, however, was to test, for the first time, McAndrew's (1992) theory that people use *-o* endings more for "unloveable" than "loveable" words, and *-ie* endings more for "loveable" than "unloveable" words. This hypothesis was tested by looking at whether people changed novel words differently depending on whether the word was placed in a sentence which makes it sound loveable or unloveable.

The second aim was to examine gender differences, in terms of both the changes made to male and female (novel) names, and the changes made by male and female participants. On the basis of the work of Phillips (1990), McAndrew (1992), and Taylor (1992), it was predicted that more *-o* endings would be applied to names presented as male, and more *-ie* endings to names presented as female. Finally, McAndrew (1992) suggested that males might produce more *-o* endings and females more *-ie* endings, due to *-o* endings being considered more tough and masculine.

Therefore, it was tentatively hypothesised that we might see more *-o* endings from male participants and more *-ie* endings from female participants overall.

Method

Participants

From an initial 145 participants, 13 were excluded from the dataset because they provided repeatedly inappropriate answers or left the majority of the questions unanswered. The final sample thus included 132 participants; 66% female (n = 87) and 34% male (n = 45) with a mean age of 24.9 years (SD = 10.3). The majority (90%) had lived in Australia their whole lives (n = 119), and the remaining 10% (n = 13) had lived in Australia for an average of 97% (SD = .09) of their lives. Almost all participants (97%, n = 127) had English as a first language. The data from the remaining participants were retained after an inspection of their responses revealed no discernible pattern of differences from the main group. Most participants (80%, n = 120) were first-year psychology students wishing to gain course credit. The remainder were recruited from social media posts and flyers placed in community spaces (Appendix A).

Materials

This study employed a list of 32 sentences (Appendix B, Table B1), each containing a novel word (Appendix B, Table B2), with eight of these novel words presented as common nouns (e.g., *prindle, hampent*), eight as place names (e.g., *Jimpet, Bankham*), eight as male personal names (e.g., *Jaelyn, Finnel*) and eight as female personal name (e.g., *Frantyn, Braidel*). The personal names were constructed to appear gender-neutral and were similar in structure for both male and female names. All words were two syllables in length.

The novel words were taken from Burton (2011), with some being revised to ensure there were no words ending in a potential hypocoristic ending already, which might prevent participants from using that ending to form their own 'Australian version' of the word. For example, we changed any words ending in the sound *-ie* or *-o*, so that we changed *glistow* to *glistem.* As described further below, new novel male and female personal names had to be created, as Burton's (2011) study only included four male names and four female names.

In order to test McAndrew's hypothesis, half of the sentences were designed to make the novel word sound "loveable", that is, appealing, cute, or elegant (e.g., *Look at the pretty little prindle on the table! It sometimes gets called a…*). The other half were designed to make the novel word sound "unloveable", that is, repulsive, tough, or vigorous (e.g., *The pollution in Ledmount is getting worse by the year. I've also heard that city called…*). Each sentence was paired with an illustrative image, such as a little wooden chicken-like object for *prindle*, or a dirty-looking city for *Ledmount*.

Before the sentences were finalised, manipulation checks were conducted to ensure that the loveability manipulation had the desired effect. A small group of participants, separate from those in the main study (n = 12), was presented with the first half of each of the 32 loveable and unloveable sentences, but with the end of each sentence removed, for example "*Look at that pretty little prindle on the table!"* without the "*but it sometimes gets called a...".* An extra set of six neutral sentences with novel words were created for this manipulation check (not to be included in the study itself) to act as a baseline for comparison, for example, "*we used to live in the town called Waldem*". Participants were required to rate on a scale of 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive) "how the sentence made the novel word sound". A

repeated-measures Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to test significant differences between the ratings given to sentences intended to sound loveable (M = 3.69, SD = .54), unloveable (M = 2.23, SD = .53), and neutral (M = 3.04, SD = .60), $F(2, 22) = 21.1$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .56$, which represents a large effect size, demonstrating that there were significant differences between the three sentence types. Paired comparisons t-tests revealed that the unloveable sentences were rated significantly more negatively than both the neutral sentences $t(11) = 3.54$, 95% CI [-1.32, -.31], $p = .005$, $d = 1.02$, and the loveable sentences, $t(11) = 5.50$, 95% CI [-2.05, -.878], $p < .001$, $d = 1.59$, and the loveable sentences were rated as significantly more positive than the neutral sentences, $t(11) = 3.79$, 95% CI [.27, 1.03], $p = .003$, $d = 1.09$, all representing large effect sizes. This justified our categorisation of the sentences framing the novel words as being either loveable or unloveable.

Manipulation checks were also made to ensure that the novel personal names used in the study appeared as gender-neutral as possible. A small group of participants (n = 18), not involved in the main study, was presented with multiple lists of novel names, and asked to rate them as either male- or female-sounding. Names that showed a clear gender preference were removed (i.e., any name rated as male- or female-sounding by more than 70% of respondents). Multiple tests were run with different lists of names, in an iterative process. In total, 49 names were sampled. Out of these, the top 16 names with the most even male-female split were taken as being the most gender-neutral and were included in the final sample, with a random half being allocated as male names (average “male” rating 53%), and half as female (average “female” rating 52%). Some adjustments were made after this manipulation check was conducted, with the names Finlee, Adley, and Mallow being changed to

Finnel, Adlay, and Malleen, as the pre-existing *-ie* and *-o* endings would have prevented them from being given these hypocoristic endings.

Procedure

The 132 participants in the main study were presented with the task as an online study, using the software Psychstudio (2019). After reading the information sheet (Appendix C) and choosing to continue, participants were required to answer a set of demographic questions relating to age, gender, how long they had spent living in Australia, and predominant language use (Appendix D). Participants were then presented with instructions which informed them of the task which involved 32 sentences where they would be required to make a change to a novel (or new) word to make it sound "more Australian". Four common, real-word examples were then provided, for example "*Some people say afternoon, but I always say* ***arvo****".* In the testing phase, participants were presented with each sentence, one at a time, for example, *That polite little boy's name is Remlen, but I've always heard his relatives call him…",* accompanied by a picture to help give a visual representation of what the sentence is describing, in this example depicting a polite-looking boy (Appendix B, Table B1). All images unambiguously showed the intended gender of the person in the sentence, and all but one of the sentences used an explicitly gendered noun (e.g., lady, boy) and/or pronoun (he, she, him, her). A text box underneath allowed participants to type their "more Australian" version of the word; for example, they might call Remlen *Remmy.*

The online program ensured that for each participant, the novel words were randomised across the eight sentences (four loveable and four unloveable), for each word type. For example, any one place name could be presented in any one of the eight place name sentences, and as either loveable or unloveable. Thus, some

participants might see "*We spent a lovely summer in the little town of Bankham, which the locals refer to as...",* whereas other participants might see "*The pollution in Bankham is getting worse by the year. I've also heard that city being called...*". This meant that we could be sure that any changes participants made to the words could be attributed to the loveability of the sentence, not to the nature of the word itself. The sentences themselves were also presented in random order for each participant.

The task took participants approximately 30 minutes to complete. Following the study, they were able to enter the draw to win a $50 Coles and Myer Gift Card or claim course credit if they were a first-year student.

Design and Analysis

Ethics approval was obtained from the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee (Appendix E). The study had a 2 (Loveability: Loveable, Unloveable) x 4 (Word Type: Common Noun, Place Name, Female Person Name, Male Person Name) x 2 (Participant Gender: Female, Male) mixed factorial design. The dependent variable was the proportion of each type of change that participants made to each novel word. For the analysis, two 2x4 repeated-measures ANOVAs with participant gender as a between-subjects variable were conducted to test the hypothesis of whether people use *-ie* endings more for words presented as loveable than unloveable; whether people use *-o* endings more for words presented as unloveable than loveable; if people use *-ie* endings more for female names than male names; and whether people use *-o* endings more for male than female names. Differences between word types of common nouns, place names, and personal names in general were exploratory in nature. While it was not a main aim, a 2x4 repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to investigate whether participants made

words longer or shorter. The DV for this analysis was the number of syllables in the changed word. Participants were able to make changes to the words in whatever way they chose. All endings were included in the analysis, but the focus was on *-ie* and *-o* endings for loveable and unloveable words.

Results

In this study, we wanted to examine whether participants made changes differently depending on whether a word was presented as 'loveable' or 'unloveable'. We also wanted to analyse whether there were any differences in the hypocoristics used for male and female names. There were no specific hypotheses made about differences across word type, whether people would make words longer or shorter, or whether there would be gender differences in the way hypocoristics were used. However, these questions were considered in an exploratory manner. The changes that participants made to each of the word types were also assessed.

What changes do people make to words when forming hypocoristics?

The 16 categories used by Burton (2011) were used as the basis for coding the changes that our participants made to the novel words, with two extra codes added: 'no answer' and 'add *-zy/zie/sie'*. The final 18 coding categories and examples are shown in Table 1, along with the percentage of each type of change made overall. 'Wordplay' included changes where participants had playfully altered the word in some way. 'Pun' included changes that related to the word, but was not a change to that specific word. 'Other' included words that did not fit into any other category. 'Other ending' represented words where an ending was added that did not fit into a pre-existing category and 'combination' included words where multiple changes were made.

Table 1

Mean Percentage of Hypocoristic Changes made to Target Novel Words (Standard Deviations in Parentheses)

Change	Example (Original + change)	Mean % (*SD*) of overall use
Add *-ie/-y*	*Ledmount-Leddie, Jimpet-Jimpy*	26 (14)
End removed	*Jesston-Jess*	25 (18)
Add *-o*	*hampent-hampo*	12 (14)
Other	*pennel-poodie*	8 (10)
Wordplay	*Remlen-Gremlin*	8 (9)
Add *-a/er/za*	*Treedon-Treeda, swinnet-swinner, Jaynor-Jazza*	4 (8)
Add *-s/z*	*Kimper-Kimps, Mallen-Maz*	3 (5)
Start removed	*Rubel-Bel*	2 (5)
The + word	*Mallock-The Lock*	2 (3)
No change	*swinnet-swinnet*	2 (4)
Add *-as/az/os/ers*	*Limeway-Limaz, Brinkton-Brinkos*	1 (2)
Other ending	*morite-morish*	1 (2)
Middle removed	*glistem-glem*	1 (1)
Combination	*Shaedon-Donny*	1 (3)
End+start removed	*morite-rit*	<1 (1)
Pun	*Bankham-Money Pig*	<1 (1)
No answer		<1 (1)
Add *-zy/zie/sie*	*Brinner-Brinzy, Limeway-Limzie, Finnel-Finnsie*	<1 (1)

Table 1 demonstrates the wide range of hypocoristic endings that participants applied to words overall. It shows that the most common hypocoristic changes participants applied to all word types were add *-ie*, ending removed, add *-o*, and wordplay. These top four changes accounted for over 70% of the changes made overall.

Before we moved on to our main analyses, we considered the most common changes made according to the loveability of the novel words. The means displayed in Figure 1 below represent the proportion of each type of change made (with the 14 less common endings condensed into "other"). The y-axes for this and later figures are shown extended to 1.00, making it easier to visualise the actual size of the effects. The observed pattern suggests that adding *-ie* and end removed were more common for words presented as loveable (rather than unloveable), whereas *-o* and wordplay were more common for words presented as unloveable (rather than loveable). Soon we will be answering the main question of whether the use of *-ie* and *-o* differed significantly for loveable and unloveable words.

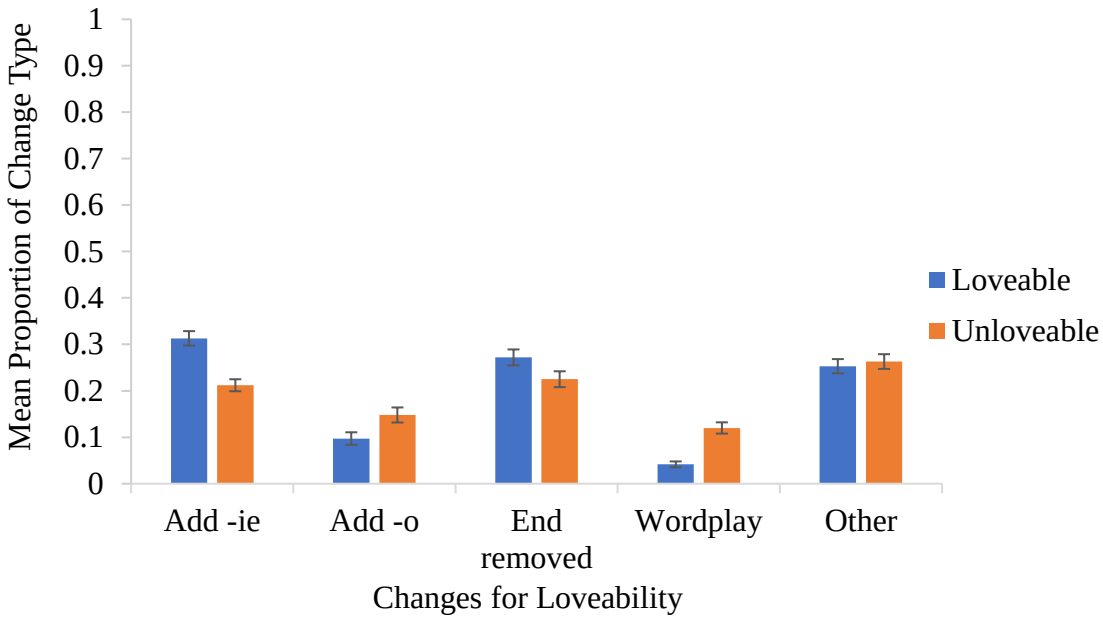

Figure 1. Means and Standard Errors of the Mean for the most Common Changes made to Loveable and Unloveable Words.

While not a main research question, we were also interested in exploring whether participants made different changes depending on the word type, with the means displayed in Figure 2 below. It appears that the addition of *-ie* was similar across the word types. Adding an *-o* ending was similar for both common nouns and place names. In terms of gender, more *-o* endings seem to have been applied to male names than female names overall. There appears to be a substantial difference in removal of word endings, with more endings removed for both male and female names than for common nouns and place names. These differences were observed out of interest, and were not analysed statistically.

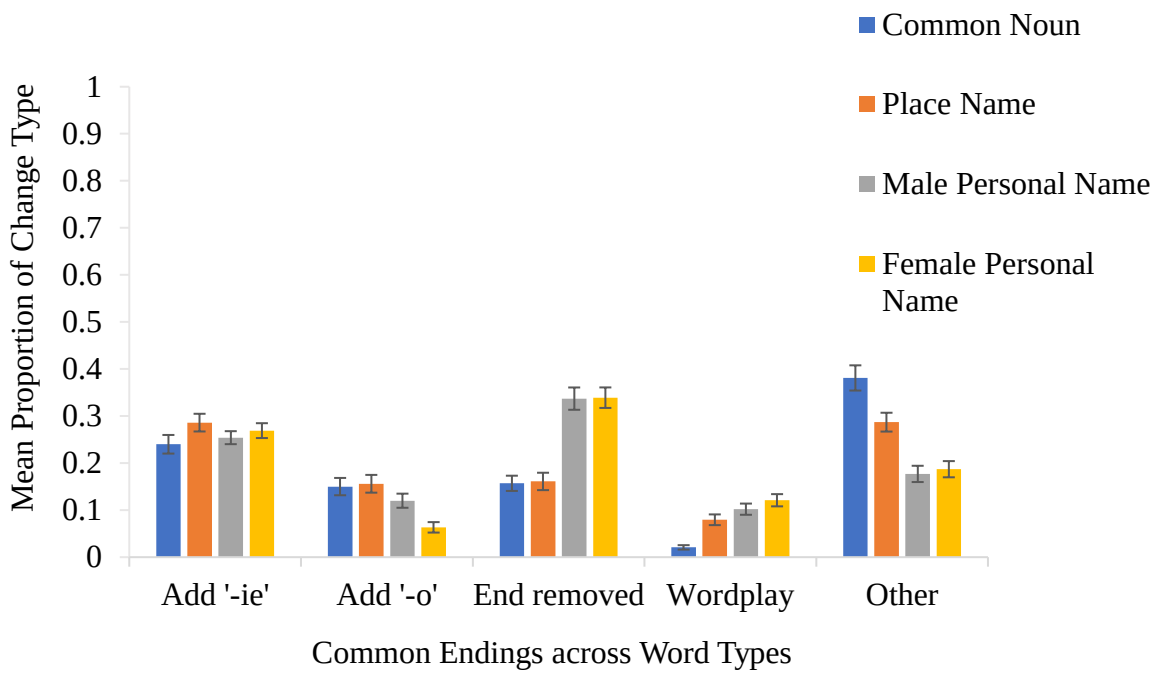

Figure 2. Means and Standard Errors of the Mean for the Common Changes made to Each of the Word Types.

Do people treat 'loveable' and 'unloveable' words differently?

Our main goal was to test McAndrew's (1992) hypothesis that more *-ie* endings would be given to loveable than unloveable words, and that more *-o* endings would be given to unloveable than loveable words. The addition of *-ie* endings was examined when broken down into word type, with the means presented in Figure 4. The pattern of results suggests that *-ie* endings were indeed more likely to be applied to loveable words, although the difference appears to be smallest in common nouns.

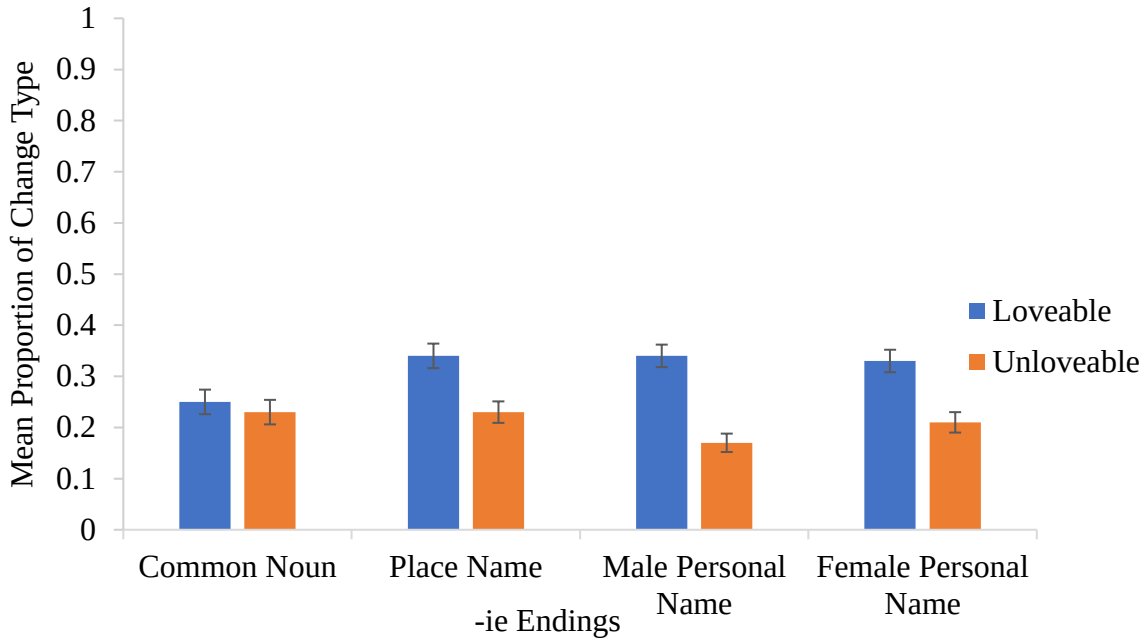

Figure 3. Means and Standard Errors of the Mean of *-ie* Endings for Different Word Types Presented as Loveable vs. Unloveable.

A repeated-measures ANOVA was conducted to examine whether there were differences in the use of *-ie* endings between loveable and unloveable novel words, as well as across the word types (for which we had no specific hypothesis). The assumption of normality was met, as data in histograms were normally distributed. Boxplots were examined for outliers, with no outliers identified for the repeated measures ANOVA for *-ie* endings. Greenhouse-Geisser corrections were applied when the assumption of sphericity was violated. These assumptions were checked for all repeated measures ANOVAs. The results revealed a significant main effect of loveability, $F(1, 130) = 40.59$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.03$, which represents a small to medium effect size, with *-ie* endings applied more often to loveable ($M = .31$, $SD = .18$) than unloveable ($M = .21$, $SD = .15$) words (see Appendix F, Table F1 for

additional results). This supports McAndrew's hypothesis about the greater use of *-ie* endings for loveable words.

There was no significant main effect of word type, $F(2.8, 364.4) = 1.94$, $p = .13$, $\eta^2 = 0.004$, which represents a small effect size, following a Greenhouse-Geisser correction (see Appendix F, Table F2 for additional results). This does not support our hypothesis that there would be significantly more *-ie* endings for female than for male names, as there were no significant differences between any of the word types.

However, the results revealed a significant interaction between loveability and word type, $F(3, 390) = 5.49$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.01$, which represents a small effect size (see Appendix F, Table F3 for additional results). Tukey LSD post hoc comparisons revealed significantly more *-ie* endings were given to loveable than unloveable words across the categories of place names ($p = .009$), and male and female names (both $p < .001$), although the difference did not reach significance for common nouns. In relation to our hypothesis that there would be significantly more *-ie* endings for female than male names, we also considered the differences in *-ie* use between loveable and unloveable female and male names. Tukey LSD post hoc comparisons showed no significant differences for either pair.

Finally, there was no significant effect of participant gender in terms of proportion of *-ie* endings used, $F(1, 130) = 1.26$, $p = .26$, $\eta^2 = .003$, which represents a small effect size (see Appendix F, Table F4 for additional results).

We then considered our other main question: participants' addition of *-o* endings across the different word types and loveability levels, with the means presented in Figure 4. In terms of our hypothesis, the pattern of results suggests that -

o endings are more likely to be applied to unloveable than loveable words, although there does not appear to be any differences for female personal names.

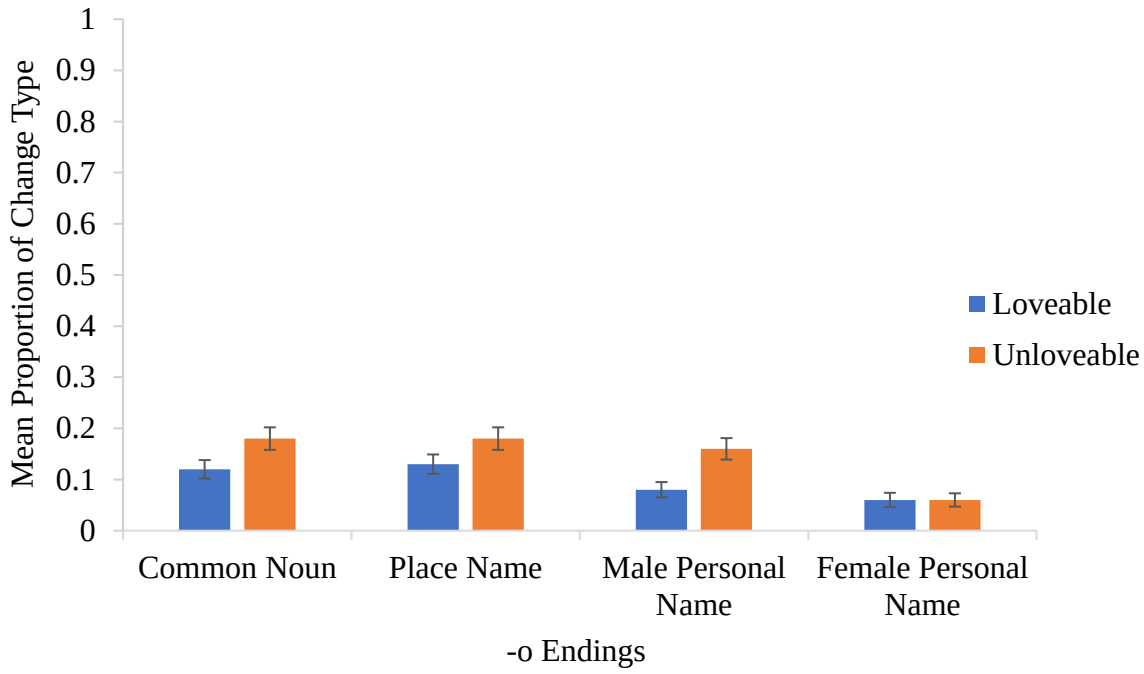

Figure 4. Means and Standard Errors of the Mean of -*o* Endings for Different Word Types Presented as Loveable vs. Unloveable.

A repeated-measures ANOVA was conducted to examine whether there were differences in the use of the -*o* ending between loveable and unloveable novel words, as well as across word types (for which we had no specific hypothesis). Boxplots showed there were eight outliers present in this ANOVA. The analysis was re-run with the outliers removed, showing no differences in the patterns of significance, so the original analysis was retained. The results demonstrated a significant main effect of loveability, $F(1, 130) = 12.02$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.01$, which represents a small effect size, with -*o* endings applied more often to unloveable ($M = .15$, $SD = .19$) than loveable ($M = .10$, $SD = .16$) words (see Appendix F, Table F5 for additional

results). This supports McAndrew's (1992) theory, and our hypothesis, of more hypocoristic *-o* changes made to unloveable than loveable words.

In this analysis was a significant main effect of word type, $F(2.7, 352.5) = 13.51$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.02$, which represents a small effect size, following a Greenhouse-Geisser correction (see Appendix F, Table F6 for additional results). Tukey LSD post hoc comparisons revealed that female personal names were given significantly fewer *-o* endings than common nouns, place names (*p*s < .001), and male personal names ($p = .003$), with no further significant differences. This supports our hypothesis that male personal names would be given significantly more *-o* endings than female personal names.

Finally, the results revealed a significant interaction between loveability and word type, $F(3, 390) = 2.93$, $p = .003$, $\eta^2 = 0.03$, which represents a small effect size (see Appendix F, Table F7 for additional results). Tukey LSD post hoc comparisons revealed that significantly more *-o* endings were given to unloveable than loveable novel words when these were presented as male personal names ($p = .004$). However, despite the numerical differences between their means, the differences did not reach significance for loveable and unloveable place names, female personal names, and common nouns. In terms of our hypothesis about there being more *-o* endings given to male than female personal names, the Tukey LSD post hoc comparisons also showed that while there was no difference between male personal names and female personal names when they were both presented as loveable, the male personal names were given significantly more *-o* endings than the female personal names when they were both presented as unloveable ($p < .001$).

The analysis revealed no significant effect of participant gender on the use of *-o* endings, $F(1, 130) = 2.76$, $p = .10$, $\eta^2 = .01$, which represents a small effect size (see Appendix F, Table F8 for additional results).

Do people make words shorter or longer?

Finally, we looked at the changes made to the length of the novel words, in terms of number of syllables, as a function of loveability, remembering that all novel words were originally two syllables in length. The means are shown in Figure 5. The pattern of results suggests that overall, male and female personal names were slightly more likely to be shortened than other word types, especially when presented as loveable rather than unloveable. Common nouns appear to be shorter when they are presented as unloveable. There do not appear to be differences for word length of place names.

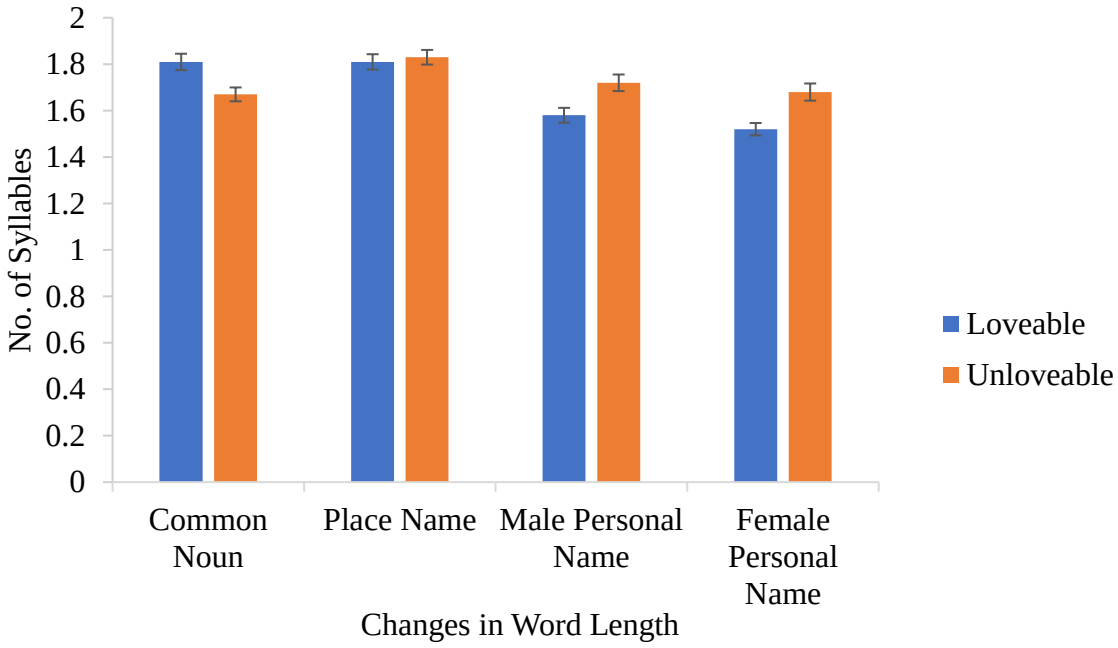

Figure 5. Means and Standard Errors of the Mean for Changes of Word Length Across Word Types and Loveability.

A repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to examine whether there were any differences in word length when forming hypocoristics, across loveability and word type. There was a significant main effect of loveability, $F(1, 130) = 6.77$, $p = 0.01$, $\eta^2 = 0.003$, which demonstrates a small effect size, with loveable words ($M = 1.68$, $SD = 0.25$) being made shorter than unloveable words ($M = 1.72$, $SD = 0.29$) (see Appendix F, Table F9 for additional results). There was a significant main effect of word type, $F(3, 390) = 26.22$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.05$, which represents a medium effect size, (see Appendix F, Table F10 for additional results). Tukey LSD post hoc comparisons revealed significant differences for number of syllables, with female personal names ($p < .001$) and male personal names ($p = .006$) being made shorter than common nouns, and both male and female personal names being made shorter than place names, ps $< .001$. The results also revealed a significant interaction between loveability and word type for number of syllables, $F(3, 390) = 13.64$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.02$, which represents a small effect size (see Appendix F, Table F11 for additional results). Tukey LSD post hoc comparisons revealed significant differences in number of syllables, with unloveable common nouns being made shorter than loveable common nouns ($p = .004$). Loveable male personal names ($p = .004$), and female personal names ($p < .001$) were made shorter than unloveable male and female names, respectively. There were no significant differences for place names.

Exploratory findings

In terms of looking at the differences for participant gender for the 16 hypocoristic changes made besides *-ie* and *-o*, there was only one significant difference found. A one-way ANOVA was conducted on each of the ending codes to determine whether male and female participants formed hypocoristics differently. There was a significant difference for wordplay, with males ($M = 0.11$, $SD = 0.11$)

being significantly more playful with the words overall than females (M = 0.07, SD = 0.08), $F(1, 67.1) = 5.22$, $p = 0.03$. All other endings were non-significant, suggesting that participants generally change words in very similar ways. However, this test showed a violation in the assumption of normality. When the analysis was re-run as a Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric test, the male-female difference became borderline, χ^2 (1) = 3.78, p = .05. It appears that any differences in males' and females' use of hypocoristics are minimal to non-existent.

Finally, we were interested to see whether there were any age differences in the use of hypocoristics. A correlation matrix showed no significant relationships at all between ending type and age. This result suggests that in this sample, the tendency to use different endings was not significantly influenced by participant age.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to examine how people generate "more Australian" hypocoristic forms of novel words when presented in sentences that make them sound either loveable or unloveable. Other studies looking at hypocoristics have used descriptive approaches to examine versions of words that have already been given hypocoristic forms in Australian English (AusE), such as *footy* for *football* or *mozzie* for *mosquito*. The present study was an extension of the previous research conducted by Burton (2011) and Webster (2012), but in an online format, with images accompanying each sentence and with the manipulation of word "loveability" added. This meant that half of the sentences were designed to sound loveable and half unloveable, so McAndrew's (1992) theory could be tested.

Our hypotheses were that people would use *-ie* endings significantly more for words presented as loveable than unloveable, and *-o* endings significantly more for words presented as unloveable than loveable. Further, we hypothesised that people

would use *-ie* endings significantly more for female names than male names; and *-o* endings significantly more for male than female names. Differences between our four-word types (common nouns, place names, and personal names) in general, as well differences between the gender and age of the participants, were explored. While it was not a main aim, the present study also looked at whether participants made words shorter or longer when creating hypocoristic versions.

In terms of the overall changes that participants made, we found that hypocoristics were generally formed in similar ways for all four-word types, with only a few differences when it came to male and female names. Both male and female names appeared to have their ends removed more than other word types and have fewer of the other endings applied, while female names were less likely to have *-o* endings applied to them than were male names. This is consistent with Burton (2011) and Webster's (2012) finding that all word types were treated similarly. As explained in the Method, it was made very clear whether the people in the sentences were male or female. This means we could draw conclusions about how people form hypocoristics for both male and female names. Research questions about how people respond to names more generally could be answered by using images of people whose gender was more ambiguous, and by avoiding the specific use of gendered nouns and pronouns, such as *boy* and *he*.

Previous work suggests that *-ie* endings are the most common hypocoristic form in Australian English (Bardsley & Simpson, 2009). Other studies have demonstrated that removing the ending was more common, followed by adding *-ie* (Burton, 2011; Kidd et al., 2011; Webster, 2012). Since there is little difference between *-ie* endings and *-o* endings for the current study, our results supported this pattern, with *-ie* endings being used overall 26% of the time, followed by 25% of

words having their end removed, and *-o* endings added 12% of the time. Personal names were significantly more likely to have their ends removed than common nouns and place names. Simpson (2001) suggested that personal names and place names are more likely than common nouns to be changed in more creative ways, and our results appear to support this. Overall, wordplay was used 8% of the time, and we observed that personal names (both male and female) and place names seemed to be subject to wordplay more often common nouns, where it was rarely used. Further, wordplay appeared to be more common when words were portrayed as being unloveable rather than loveable sounding. Sussex (2004) suggested that people are aware of the language choices they make and are often playful in doing so, using humour to convey slander and jokes. It is possible that the high rate of wordplay was a result of participants using their humour to make words sound 'more Australian' (Burton, 2011), and may have been used to 'slander' the unloveable words.

In terms of our hypotheses, our data supported the prediction that people would be significantly more likely to add *-ie* endings to words presented as loveable than unloveable, confirming McAndrew's (1992) theory. Kidd et al. (2011) found that when participants were required to list as many pre-existing hypocoristics as they could recall, most were affectionate for the ones they gave *-ie* endings to (e.g., *bickie* for *biscuit*), although some were suggestive of negative implications (e.g., *druggie* for *drug addict*). In our study, there was an interaction between word type and loveability, with *-ie* used significantly more often for personal names and place names, but with no significant difference between *-ie* use for loveable and unloveable common nouns. One possible explanation could relate to Simpson's (2004) suggestion that place names and personal names are the more likely word types to be changed in creative ways, reflected also in the observation that creating

nicknames in friendship groups is a common occurrence (Starks, Leech, & Willoughby, 2012). However, in the "real world", beyond this somewhat artificial study, it seems that people mainly use pre-existing hypocoristics for common nouns, such as *pressie* for *present*, rather than making up their own. Therefore, it might have been more difficult and confusing for our participants to make changes to novel common nouns than to personal or place names, leading to less systematic differences in the common noun word type.

McAndrew (1992) claimed that the *-ie* endings are perceived as loveable because they express familiarity and affection, which could help to explain why they would be applied to words that are loveable-sounding. However, he also recognised that *-ie* endings can be used in a way that is not at all loveable, but rather as a term of criticism and rebuke (e.g., *matie* for someone who is not really a *mate*). Although our participants did apply *-ie* endings to more loveable words than unloveable words, these tendencies were by no means absolute: *-ie* endings were applied to 31% of loveable and 21% of unloveable words. This suggests that there is more to the application of *-ie* endings than simply trying to convey affection. McAndrew also acknowledged this, stating that these are not absolute tendencies. People apply *-ie* and *-o* to a variety of words, however, they tend to use them more frequently for loveable and unloveable words, respectively.

In terms of our second hypothesis, we also confirmed that people were significantly more likely to add *-o* endings to words presented as unloveable than loveable. However, just as with the *-ie* endings, the percentages were relatively low, with *-o* endings being applied to unloveable words 15% of the time and to loveable words 10% of the time. McAndrew (1992) did suggest that *-o* endings are used far less often than *-ie* endings, but when they are used, they are often used in a

disapproving and unloveable way, which is what was discovered in the current study. He also suggested that these *-o* endings are often applied due to laziness and carelessness, as a way of exerting less effort. It is possible that this laziness could have contributed to the *-o* endings that participants also applied to loveable-sounding words. Overall, the findings of this study can be seen to provide support for communication accommodation theory (CAT) proposed by Giles (2008), as mentioned in the introduction. The results are in line with the idea that people use hypocoristics in a way that makes sense to others, by changing words in a meaningful and socially accepted manner.

Our final hypotheses concerned the application of hypocoristics to male and female names. Both male and female names were more likely than common nouns and place names to have their endings removed. In contradiction to our hypothesis, which was based on McAndrew's theory and Phillips' (1990) study, female names did not receive more *-ie* endings than male names. This finding is also consistent with Burton's (2011) study, however, Webster (2012) found significantly more *-ie* endings were applied to female than male names. One explanation for this finding could be due to almost all our loveable male names unintentionally being depicted as little boys/babies in the images (with no men), whereas our loveable female names depicted a range of little girls/babies, older teens, and women. Since children might be more likely to receive an *-ie* ending than adults, this preponderance of young males in the loveable condition might help to explain why there were so many *-ie* endings applied to male names, and why we did not see a significant difference from the number of *-ie* endings applied to females.

In support of our hypothesis, significantly more *-o* endings were applied to male than female names. This finding is consistent with Phillips' (1990), Burton's

(2011), Webster's (2012) studies, with more *-o* endings being used for male names. This supports the suggestion made by Taylor (1992) and Wierzbicka (1986) that applying the *-o* ending can help define what might be considered masculine. In line with McAndrew's (1992) theory of loveable *-ie* and unloveable *-o* endings, it could also be suggested that due to the *-o* ending being recognised as more "rough and vigorous", more of these qualities might be associated with males rather than females. This is further supported by our finding that even when both male and female names were presented as unloveable, the male names were given more *-o* endings than unloveable female names.

We also considered differences in the way that hypocoristics were used by our male and female participants. While it has been suggested that males might use more unloveables than females (McAndrew, 1992), the current study demonstrated no significant effects of participant gender for *-o* endings, suggesting that males and females do not use these hypocoristics differently. This is consistent with the findings of Kidd et al. (2011), who did not find an overall difference in the use of the *-o* ending for participant gender. Interestingly, they did find an interaction between participant gender and age, where young females listed more *-o* endings than young males, and middle-aged males provided more *-o* endings than middle-aged females (Kidd et al., 2011). This could be a result of young women becoming more masculine or gender neutral and are saying "masculine" things more than their middle-aged female counterparts.

In the current study, the young female participants applied more *-o* endings than what traditionally might be expected, creating a lack of a difference between male and females using *-o* endings. McAndrew (1992, p. 168) also suggested that males would be just as likely as females to use *-ie* endings in childish ways to

demonstrate that “there is no class in language expression”. This is consistent with our results, as there was no significant effect of participant gender for *-ie* endings either, suggesting that males and females also apply *-ie* endings similarly. The only significant difference found for male and female participants for the endings other than *-ie* and *-o* was in the use of wordplay, suggesting that males tend to be more playful with words than females. However, it appears that overall, males and females form hypocoristics similarly.

When looking at whether hypocoristics made words consistently shorter, Burton (2011) and Webster’s (2012) studies both demonstrated that shorter words (one syllable) tended to be made longer, and longer words (two and three syllables) tended to be made shorter, with personal names being more likely to be shortened than common nouns or place names. The words in the present study were all two syllables in length and supported Burton’s (2011) findings, demonstrating that, on average, participants made all hypocoristic words slightly shorter than the original two-syllable length. Male and female names were made significantly shorter than place names, and female names were made shorter than common nouns. The data in the present study also demonstrated that personal names were more likely to have their endings removed than common nouns or place names. De Klerk and Bosch (1996) suggested that shortening a male name (e.g., *Samuel* to *Sam*) can make it sound more masculine, whereas shortening a female name (e.g., *Isabella* to *Isa*) can make it sound less feminine. This could help to suggest why unloveable male and female names were made shorter than loveable male and female names.

Limitations and Future Directions

As our participants were predominantly first-year psychology students, there was a lack of data from older participants, with 65% of participants being under 22

years of age. We found no significant correlations between the proportions of the different endings used and participant age. However, more participants from different age groups would be needed to be able to draw meaningful conclusions from this pattern. A future direction for research would be to recruit more even numbers of participants in the age brackets that Kidd et al. (2011) devised; 'Young' (17- 39-year-olds), 'Middle-aged' (40- 59-year-olds), and 'Older' (60- to 84-year-olds). Recruitment strategies for each specific age group could be used, advertising in community spaces, such as the university for young participants, in various workplaces for middle-aged participants, and in senior-aged clubs for the older participants. We might see an increase in *-o* endings from older participants, as it has been suggested that *-o* endings are being used less by younger people (Kidd et al., 2011).

Another limitation of our study sample relates to the higher percentage of female participants (66%) than male participants. No significant differences for participant gender were discovered in the use of *-ie* and *-o* endings, and virtually none for any other endings (with the possible exception of males using more wordplay than females). A greater sample of male participants would have provided more representative results of the general population. Future research could aim to recruit participants from other university courses where numbers of male students are greater, as Psychology is a largely female-dominated course.

Despite the care taken in developing the novel words, one limitation recognised only later was that several of the personal names, when shortened, could have ended up as real hypocoristic name forms (e.g., *Jesston* to *Jessie* or *Rubel* to *Ruby*). This might have biased participants to create these pre-existing forms. Future

researchers should therefore carefully consider possible alternative forms of all target novel words.

As our sentences were accompanied by images which aimed to emphasise the loveability of each sentence, we found that some answers seemed to be influenced by the image itself. This was especially the case for common nouns, which had a higher percentage of changes coded as 'other' than the other word types. Our aim had been to have the images depict non-nameable objects or unusual items, so that it would seem plausible to associate them with novel word names. However, many of the common noun images did resemble nameable objects. For example, the sentence "*I sprinkled the cake with delicious strands of tordon. Some people call it..."* was paired with an image of a cake with sprinkles on it. Twenty-four people (18% of the sample) responded 'sprinkles', rather than thinking of a hypocoristic form of *tordon*. As this was a regular occurrence within participants' answers for common nouns, even when they did make correct changes to the other word types, it is possible that participants found it more difficult to change the common nouns. This might reflect people's more common tendency to be more creative with place and personal names than common nouns, and therefore looked to the image for help.

In future studies, it will be important to make images more ambiguous, or to remove them altogether, to avoid participants inserting real words instead of hypocoristic forms of the given novel word target. We did conduct a second version of this experiment (with 66 further participants) which was identical except for having the images removed. Although reporting this second version as well is beyond the scope of this thesis, the results were almost identical in terms of the use of the *-ie* and *-o* endings for loveable and unloveable words. We did find, however, that removing images dramatically decreased the amount of "other" responses for

common nouns (from 38% to 8%), suggesting that the images did influence participants' responses to changing common nouns.

Implications and Conclusion

The patterns in our data imply that the use of AusE is more than just a 'lazy' distortion of British English, as it was once believed to be (Delbridge, 2001). The finding of loveable *-ie* endings and unloveable *-o* endings suggests that different hypocoristics are applied to convey different meanings and are more than just a phonological process (Simpson, 2004). Applying more *-o* endings to male names implies that males are considered more masculine and 'tough' than females, rather than demonstrating a nurturing and affectionate connotation in terms of McAndrew's (1992) theory. Not all hypocoristics are perceived as equal, and people appear to be aware of the changes they make (de Klerk & Bosch, 1996), applying different changes depending on the context. Australians' love of informality and dislike for articulated speech appears to be evident in the wide variety of changes. It demonstrates that there are no set rules to AusE, allowing speakers to express their creativity with the words they use. This creativity is especially evident with personal names and place names, but not so much for common nouns. People appear to be aware of the flexibility they have with AusE when they have experience in using hypocoristics in everyday conversations. The amount of wordplay applied is suggestive of the need to express humour into conversations that Wierzbicka (1986) stated is important in Australian culture. Hypocoristics are still widely used in AusE, as a way of conveying meaning and expressing our Australian love for informality, as well as making language more 'fun'. Although there may be changes relating to the most common hypocoristics used, as *-o* endings are becoming less common, it can be safely assumed that the use of hypocoristics in AusE is here to stay.

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Appendix A: Participant Recruitment Flyer

Ethics no. H0018026

UNIVERSITY of TASMANIA

College of Health and Medicine

Benny or Benno? Our Aussie lingo

*Do you like to have a **bevvy** with your best mate **Tommo**, while watching the **footy** at **The G**?*
If so, this might be the study for you!

A QUICK GUIDE TO SPEAKING AUSTRALIAN

~~afternoon~~ **arvo**
~~mosquito~~ **mozzie**
~~tradesperson~~ **tradie**
~~cup of tea~~ **cuppa**
~~sick day~~ **sickie**
~~service station~~ **servo**

This study aims to investigate how adults use **Australian lingo** when presented with made-up words and names to make them sound 'more Australian'.

Anyone over the age of 18 who is currently living in Australia is welcome to participate.

This study involves an anonymous **online experiment** which will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. It can be completed on a computer or a phone. Participants have the **chance to win** a Coles Group & Myer Gift Card on completion of the study.

Thank you for your time.

Chief Investigator
Dr. Nenagh Kemp
nenagh.kemp@utas.edu.au

Student Investigator
Hanna Davie
hrdavie@utas.edu.au

Scan me

For more information, or to begin the study, follow this link:
https://www.psychstudio.com/s/533 **or scan the QR code on your phone.**

First-year Psychology students need to access the study via the SONA website to gain course credit.

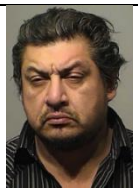
Appendix B: Questionnaire

Table B1 Questionnaire Sentences and images

Loveable and Unloveable Sentences with Accompanying Images

	Sentences
Ex. 1	 Some people say *afternoon*, but I always say ***arvo***
Ex. 2	 We went on a holiday to *Wollongong.* The locals call it ***The Gong***
Ex. 3	 My friend's name is *Darren,* but we always call him ***Dazza***
Ex. 4	 I was born in Launceston, but I refer to it as ***Launnie***
1	 Chuck me that big (*commonnoun*), will you? Some people call it a...
2	 That truck just dumped a big load of (*commonnoun*). The driver referred to it as...
3	 Her scarf was made from a shimmering sheet of (*commonnoun*). She called that material...
4	 Watch out you don't step in that disgusting (*commonnoun*). We also call it...
5	 I'm not having a big, dirty (*commonnoun*) in my house! I don't care if you call it a...
6	 My grandmother wore a lovely (*commonnoun*) made out of lace. Apparently they used to call it a...

7	 Look at the pretty little (*commonnoun*) on the table! It sometimes gets called a...
8	 I sprinkled the cake with delicious strands of (*commonnoun*). Some people call it...
9	 We spent a lovely summer in the little town of (*placename*), which the locals refer to as...
10	 There's quite high unemployment in (*placename*), a big city that's also called...
11	 The pollution in (*placename*) is getting worse by the year. I've also heard that city being called...
12	 They do the most beautiful embroidery in the village of (*placename*), a place that I've heard people call...
13	 Last night there were riots in the streets of the poorer areas of (*placename*), a city that also gets called...
14	 That quiet town nestled in the hills is called (*placename*) but the locals call it...
15	 Another factory just closed in the industrial town of (*placename*), which the locals refer to as...
16	 Have you seen the quaint little village fair at (*placename*)? Some people call it...

17	 The nice lady working in the shop is called (*femalepersonname*), but her work colleagues call her...
18	 My favourite singer's name is (*femalepersonname*), but her fans like to call her...
19	Nobody likes to go near (*femalepersonname*). I've heard people call her...
20	The girl who tripped me over is called (*femalepersonname*), but everyone calls her...
21	The scary woman who started a gang is called (*femalepersonname*), but everyone calls her...
22	I heard that (*femalepersonname*) got into a fight at school, and now people call her...
23	 The popular girl's name is (*femalepersonname*), but her little sister calls her...
24	 My best friend's name is (*femalepersonname*), but I often call her...
25	 That polite little boy's name is (*malepersonname*), but I've heard his relatives call him...
26	 That big man smoking outside the pub is called (*malepersonname*), but lots of people call him...

27	That big bully of a co-worker I was telling you about (malepersonname), also gets called...
28	They named their new baby boy (*malepersonname*), but he's so cute I reckon they'll call him...
29	That tattooed yobbo's name is (*malepersonname*), but I've heard people call him...
30	My young daughter has a little friend called (*malepersonname*), and she likes to call him...
31	That cute toddler in the overalls is named (*malepersonname*), but all the childcare workers call him...
32	The first name of the young man charged with the series of burglaries is (*malepersonname*), but he's also known as...

Table B2

Novel Words Grouped into Word Type Groups

Word Type	Novel Word
Common Nouns	morite tordon glistem hampent pennel prindle swinnet clafton
Place Names	Treedon Jimpet Ledmount Kimper Mallock Bankham Limeway Brinkton
Female Names	Ashett Braidel Rubel Andrah Malleen Jaynor Jesston Frantyn
Male Names	Tammis Remlen Jaelyn Shaedon Adlay Finnel Pemble Brinner

Appendix C: Participant Information Sheet

College of Health and Medicine

***Bennie or Benno?* A study of lingo in Australian adults**

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Research team *Dr. Nenagh Kemp,* supervisor

Hanna Davie, Honours student

Division of Psychology, School of Medicine, University of Tasmania

Email nenagh.kemp@utas.edu.au or phone (03) 6226 7534

1. Invitation

You are invited to participate in an online study examining the way adults change words to make them sound more Australian (e.g., "servo" for "service station" or "footy" for football").

This study is being conducted as part of a thesis, by honours student Hanna Davie, supervised by Assoc Prof Nenagh Kemp.

2. What is the purpose of this study?

This study aims to investigate the kinds of changes that people make to new (made-up) words to make them sound more Australian. We are interested in whether people make different changes to different words and whether the types of changes made vary with people's gender and age.

3. How is the study being funded?

This research is being run as a Psychology Honours project. Honours year funding will be used to pay for two x $50 Coles Group & Myer Gift Cards, which participants may enter a draw to win (or receive 30 minutes of course credit for first-year Psychology students).

4. Why have I been invited to participate?

We are interested in the responses of people of all ages and backgrounds. We are therefore inviting anyone (over the age of 18 years) who would like to participate, as long as they live in Australia. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and your choice to take part or not take part will have no consequences. First-year Psychology students may choose this study from a range of study types, or complete a non-research alternative instead (see relevant unit documents). If you choose to receive course credit/enter the draw for a gift voucher, the two research team members will see your name and email address. However, your actual responses will be entirely anonymous, and not linked to your details.

5. What will I be asked to do?

You will first be required to answer a set of demographic questions such as age, gender, predominant language use, and number of years spent living in Australia. You will not be required to provide any information which might reveal your identity. You will then be given a set of 32 sentences, where a made-up word will be present in *italics* as either a common noun, place name, or person name. At the end of each sentence, there will be a prompt such as "some people call it…" where you will be required to come up with a new form of the word. Participation is expected to take approximately 20-30 minutes.

6. Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?

Although we do not expect that there will be direct benefits for participants in this study, it will help to advance our theoretical and practical knowledge of how people use Australian English, and will have implications for those learning it as a second language. Further, many people find it interesting to think about the different ways they change words as part of speaking Australian English, and might therefore enjoy taking part in this type of study.

7. Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?

No significant risks for participants are anticipated.

8. What if I change my mind during or after the study?

If you do not wish to continue during the study, you are free to withdraw at any time. However, once you have finished doing the study, your data cannot be removed. This is because the study is anonymous and therefore we can't identify individual participants' data in the final data-set.

9. What will happen to the data when this study is over?

Data will be non-identifiable, meaning that there is no way to link it back to participants' identities. Data will be stored on a password-protected University of Tasmania database which will only be accessible by the

researchers of this study. Data will be deleted five years after publication of the results. Details of participants who choose to enter the draw to win a gift card/gain course credit will have their details deleted as soon as the prizes/credit points have been claimed. As previously mentioned, these details are not linked to participant response data for the study.

10. How will the results of the study be published?

The data from this study will be discussed in an Honours thesis and may be published later in an academic journal. If you would like to see the results of this study or read the completed thesis, please contact us.

11. What if I have questions about this study?

If you have any queries, concerns or issues with this study, please feel free to contact either the supervisor of the study, Dr Nenagh Kemp (nenagh.kemp@utas.edu.au, ph. (03) 6226 7534), or Honours student Hanna Davie (hrdavie@utas.edu.au) for more information.

This study has been approved by the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, you can contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on (03) 6226 6254 or email ss.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominate to receive complaints from research participants. You will need to quote H0018026.

If you have read and understood the information listed above and would like to participate, please press next to begin the questionnaire.

In order to keep your information anonymous, your consent will be implied by the completion and submission of the survey. If you wish to take part in the gift voucher draw or receive course credit for your participation, at the end of the survey there will be the opportunity to follow a link and provide your name and email address to allow this. This information will not be connected to your survey responses.

Thank you for your time.

Appendix D: Demographic Survey

Gender:

Male

Female

Would rather not say

Other

Age (in years):

_____

How long have you been living in Australia?

Years _____ Months _____

My Whole life: Yes/No

Is English your first language?

Yes

No

If you answered no to the question above, what is your first language?

_____

Do you speak any languages other than English?

Yes

No

Language _____

Fluency: Basic/Semi-fluent/Fluent

Appendix E: UTAS Human Research Ethics Committee Approval Letter

UNIVERSITY of TASMANIA

05 April 2019

AssocProf Nenagh Kemp
C/- University of Tasmania

Sent via email

Dear AssocProf Kemp

REF NO: H0018026
TITLE: Benny or Benno? How Australians create slang words and names

We are pleased to advise that acting on a mandate from the Tasmania Social Sciences HREC, the Chair of the committee considered and approved the above project on 04 April 2019.

Please ensure that all investigators involved with this project have cited the approved versions of the documents listed within this letter and use only these versions in conducting this research project.

This approval constitutes ethical clearance by the Tasmania Social Sciences HREC. The decision and authority to commence the associated research may be dependent on factors beyond the remit of the ethics review process. For example, your research may need ethics clearance from other organisations or review by your research governance coordinator or Head of Department. It is your responsibility to find out if the approvals of other bodies or authorities are required. It is recommended that the proposed research should not commence until you have satisfied these requirements.

In accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, it is the responsibility of institutions and researchers to be aware of both general and specific legal requirements, wherever relevant. If researchers are uncertain they should seek legal advice to confirm that their proposed research is in compliant with the relevant laws. University of Tasmania researchers may seek legal advice from Legal Services at the University.

All committees operating under the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network are registered and required to comply with the *National Statement on the Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (NHMRC 2007 updated 2018).

Therefore, the Chief Investigator's responsibility is to ensure that:

(1) All investigators are aware of the terms of approval, and that the research is conducted in compliance with the HREC approved protocol or project description.

(2) Modifications to the protocol do not proceed until approval is obtained in writing from the HREC. This includes, but is not limited to, amendments that:
(i) are proposed or undertaken in order to eliminate immediate risks to participants;

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UNIVERSITY of TASMANIA

(ii) may increase the risks to participants;
(iii) significantly affect the conduct of the research; or
(iv) involve changes to investigator involvement with the project.

Please note that all requests for changes to approved documents must include a version number and date when submitted for review by the HREC.

(3) Reports are provided to the HREC on the progress of the research and any safety reports or monitoring requirements as indicated in NHMRC guidance. Researchers should notify the HREC immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants.

(4) The HREC is informed as soon as possible of any new safety information, from other published or unpublished research, that may have an impact on the continued ethical acceptability of the research or that may indicate the need for modification of the project.

(5) All research participants must be provided with the current Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form, unless otherwise approved by the Committee.

(6) This study has approval for four years contingent upon annual review. A *Progress Report* is to be provided on the anniversary date of your approval. Your first report is due 04 April 2020 and you will be sent a courtesy reminder closer to this due date. Ethical approval for this project will lapse if a Progress Report is not submitted in the time frame provided

(7) A *Final Report* and a copy of the published material, either in full or abstract, must be provided at the end of the project.

(8) The HREC is advised of any complaints received or ethical issues that arise during the course of the project.

(9) The HREC is advised promptly of the emergence of circumstances where a court, law enforcement agency or regulator seeks to compel the release of findings or results. Researchers must develop a strategy for addressing this and seek advice from the HREC.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me on (03) 6226 6254 or via email ss.ethics@utas.edu.au.

Yours sincerely

Jude Vienna-Hallam
Executive Officer I Social Sciences

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Appendix F: Additional Results

Table F1

95% Confidence Intervals for the repeated-measures ANOVA looking at -ie endings for loveability

	Confidence Intervals
Loveable words	.28/.34
Unloveable words	.18/.24

Note: Lower bound/Upper bound.

Table F2

Mean, Standard Deviation, and 95% Confidence Intervals for the repeated-measures ANOVA looking at -ie endings for word type

	M	*SD*	Confidence Intervals
Common Nouns	.24	.23	.20/.27
Place Names	.29	.22	.25/.32
Male Personal Names	.25	.16	.22/.29
Female Personal Names	.27	.18	.23/.30

Note: Lower bound/Upper bound.

Table F3

95% Confidence Intervals for the repeated-measures ANOVA looking at -ie endings for the interaction between loveability and word type

	Confidence Intervals
Loveable Common Nouns	.20/.29
Unloveable Common Nouns	.19/.28

Loveable Place Names	.29/.38
Unloveable Place Names	.19/.28
Loveable Male Personal Names	.29/.38
Unloveable Male Personal Names	.13/.22
Loveable Female Personal Names	.28/.37
Unloveable Female Personal Names	.16/.25

Note: Lower bound/Upper bound.

Table F4

Mean, Standard Deviation, and 95% Confidence Intervals for the repeated-measures ANOVA looking at -ie endings for participant gender

	M	*SD*	Confidence Intervals
Male Participants	.24	.13	.21/.28
Female Participants	.30	.15	.24/.31

Note: Lower bound/Upper bound.

Table F5

95% Confidence Intervals for the repeated-measures ANOVA looking at -o endings for loveability

	Confidence Intervals
Loveable words	.07/.13
Unloveable words	.11/.17

Note: Lower bound/Upper bound.

Table F6

Means, Standard Deviation, and 95% Confidence Intervals for the repeated-measures ANOVA looking at -o endings for word type

	M	*SD*	Confidence Intervals
Common Nouns	.15	.21	.11/.19
Place Names	.16	.22	.12/.19
Male Personal Names	.12	.17	.10/.15
Female Personal Names	.06	.13	.04/.10

Note: Lower bound/Upper bound.

Table F7

95% Confidence Intervals for the repeated-measures ANOVA looking at -o endings for the interaction between word type and loveability

	Confidence Intervals
Loveable Common Nouns	.08/.16
Unloveable Common Nouns	.13/.21
Loveable Place Names	.09/.17
Unloveable Place Names	.14/.21
Loveable Male Personal Names	.05/.12
Unloveable Male Personal Names	.12/.19
Loveable Female Personal Names	.03/.10
Unloveable Female Personal Names	.03/.12

Note: Lower bound/Upper bound.

Table F8

Means, Standard Deviations, and 95% Confidence Intervals for the repeated-measures ANOVA looking at -o endings for participant gender

	M	*SD*	Confidence Intervals
Male Participants	.09	.15	.06/.14
Female Participants	.14	.16	.11/.18

Note: Lower bound/Upper bound.

Table F9

95% Confidence Intervals for the repeated-measures ANOVA looking at syllable length for loveability.

	Confidence Intervals
Loveable Words	1.6/1.7
Unloveable Words	1.7/1.8

Note: Lower bound/Upper bound.

Table F10

Means, Standard Deviations, and 95% Confidence Intervals for the repeated-measures ANOVA looking at syllable length for word type

	M	*SD*	Confidence Intervals
Common Nouns	1.7	.32	1.7/1.8
Place Names	1.8	.30	1.8/1.9
Male Personal Names	1.6	.34	1.6/1.7

Female Personal Names	1.6	.31	1.5/1.6

Note: Lower bound/Upper bound.

Table F11

95% Confidence Intervals for the repeated-measures ANOVA looking at syllable length for the interaction between loveability and word type

	Confidence Intervals
Loveable Common Nouns	1.7/1.9
Unloveable Common Nouns	1.6/1.7
Loveable Place Names	1.7/1.9
Unloveable Place Names	1.8/1.9
Loveable Male Personal Names	1.5/1.6
Unloveable Male Personal Names	1.7/1.8
Loveable Female Personal Names	1.4/1.6
Unloveable Female Personal Names	1.6/1.7

Note: Lower bound/Upper bound.